

Amendments to the Specification

Please replace the paragraph at page 4, lines 4 through 11 with the following amended paragraph:

The present invention features administering to a patient a composition comprising alpha-ketoalkanoic acid and/or one of its derivatives, which specifically includes a physiologically-acceptable salt of alpha-ketoalkanoic acid, an ester of alpha-ketoalkanoic acid, or an amide of alpha-ketoalkanoic acid for the treatment of a cytokine-mediated inflammatory condition. Suitable alpha-ketoalkanoic acids include C₃-C₈ straight chained or branched alpha-ketoalkanoic acids, for example, pyruvic acid. Physiologically acceptable salts, of alpha-ketoalkanoic acids include Na⁺, K⁺, Ca⁺⁺, Mg⁺⁺, NH₄⁺ and the like.